

# INTERACTION

The Magazine for  
Agfa Corporation Employees

AGFA 

Fall 1999 – Volume 11, Number 4

## The Sharper Image



# Continuous Improvement and Recognition

## Inside

*Business News:*  
Acquisition Update

6

*People:*  
Setting Sites  
On Accomplishments

5

*Management Message:*  
Teresa Oakley

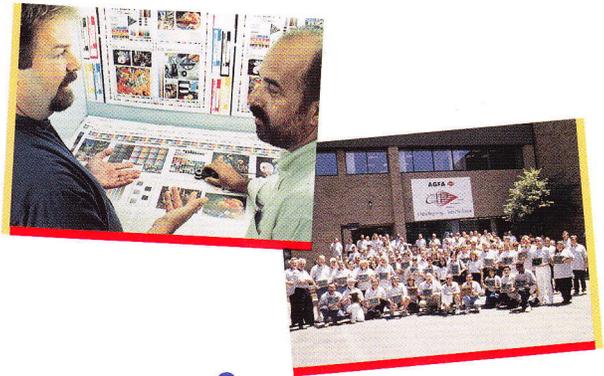
7

*Products:*  
Maximum Efficiency  
and Creativity

9

*Cover Story:*

*Spotlight:*



# Brainstorming, Analysis, Recognition...

**CIP**, the Continuous Improvement Process, works best when the benefits to our company and employees are reinforced. At Quality Day celebrations and meetings in Wilmington, Branchburg and Bushy Park this summer, where Quality Excellence Awards (QEA) were presented, and at the President's Golden Achievement Awards (PGAA), which took place in late September in New York City

and Jersey City, recognition became one of CIP's strongest and most exciting reinforcement tools. At the latter event, which included a dinner cruise and an awards ceremony at the Liberty Science Center, approximately 200 attendees, including employees and special guests got a close-up look at all CIP tools and solutions that have empowered employees to save the company millions of dollars and improved many products and business processes.

It is now up to the members of the five QEA teams who were part of the PGAA celebration to continue to share the benefits of CIP with their colleagues at work and to get them more involved with the process. That way, more of *them* will be recognized next year, and the empowerment - success-celebration cycle will continue.



*CIP at Agfa (clockwise from top left): analysis in Branchburg, Quality Day in New Jersey, celebration in Wilmington, research in Bushy Park.*

## Champions

"Two things we have learned about CIP are that employees who have experienced it become champions of it, and that recognition is one of the strongest and most exciting support mechanisms we have," says Dennis King, Quality Director. "An event like the PGAA not only strengthens our efforts to let our teams know we appreciate what they've done for Agfa, but it also shows the rest of the company that Agfa doesn't hold back when it comes to helping employees and teams do the best they can."

*The Sharper Image* from Branchburg, *The Eradicators* and *The Clothing Optional CIT* from Bushy Park, *The Engineering Corrective Action Team* from



Once team write-ups were submitted to the Quality Department it became clear that the process continued unabated at the new Agfa Corporation. Forty-eight teams who submitted write-ups were selected as Quality Excellence Award-winners, representing 528 employees.

## Full Reports

"Although it is clear that the Continuous Improvement Process at Agfa continues to grow, the proof isn't just in the number of teams winning QEAs but also in the enthusiasm of the employees who prepare the write-ups," says Industrial Imaging Director Joe Cavell, a member of the Selection Committee. "The forms are full of impressive results, informative background and backup, even glimpses into

# There are many tools of C

*First there's teamwork, using CIP tools such as brainstorming, analysis, research, and benchmarking, and then there's recognition, which reinforces the benefits of having tea*

Wilmington, and the company-wide *Work/Life Balance Team* were chosen by a special Selection Committee last summer to be part of the PGAA, basing their decisions on initiative shown, CIP tools used, the effectiveness of their teamwork, the corporate objectives met, the impact of their solutions, and other criteria.

Those five teams, in turn, voted by secret ballot to choose the top PGAA team. *The Sharper Image* won.

## Good Impressions

"I'm overwhelmed," said team member Dave Siegfried, a Product Development Engineer. "I'm proud of the team for having won the award, and I'm equally impressed with the PGAA event itself, which is comparable to the Bayer President's Achievement Awards in Pittsburgh. For a first-time event at Agfa, it was a great job all around."

While CIP has been an Agfa initiative for several years, the PGAA was created just last year, after the Bayer President's Achievement Awards, which was the last quality recognition event we celebrated as part of Bayer. A PGAA committee was formed and immediately began an effort to develop an Agfa program that would build on Bayer's program and give Agfa employees even more of a reason to empower themselves by forming CIP teams.

the future of how the teams' efforts will continue to work for Agfa."

All members from the top five teams, and their guests, spent three days in New York City and Jersey City for the first annual Agfa Corporation President's Golden Achievement Awards.



A dinner cruise aboard the glass-enclosed Bateaux on Wednesday, September 29, highlighted the first day's event, followed by an overnight stay at the New York Marriott Marquis, in the heart of Manhattan's Times Square and Broadway district. On Thursday evening, September 30, buses departed New York for The Liberty Science Center, where the PGAA dinner and ceremony took place, featuring a PGAA multi-media presentation, an open tour of the Center's science exhibits, and the announcement of the Grand Prize-winning team.

"We've done things a little differently at our first PGAA because we have always done things differently at Agfa," said Erhard Rittinghaus during the presentations. "We are gathered here to celebrate the best of the best. These teams represent the best examples of how diverse groups can make a difference, and of how CIP is to the benefit of all of Agfa Corporation. I ask you all to be ambassadors of the Continuing Improvement Process."

Although the PGAA is also designed for the enjoyment of all the employees being recognized – as well as those who helped in the creation of the PGAA from conception to selection to implementation – the seriousness of CIP and the teamwork that makes it successful was never far from the general tone and theme of the event.

### Five Success Stories

The top-recognition team, *The Sharper Image*, was concerned with Pressmatch Dry Negative, an Agfa product manufactured in Branchburg that is part of one of the most innovative and fastest-growing product lines. But a “reciprocity failure” was discovered that affected image sharpness when using low-power light sources. After a half year of intense data collection, analysis and consensus,



A recent diversity survey of Agfa employees pointed out an issue of concern to many of us—balancing work with home-based responsibilities. Agfa’s MCM endorsed the formation of this team, *The Work/Life Balance Team*, to develop a strategy that would satisfy most employees while also

increasing their commitment. After sharing dozens of ideas with each other, including the results of extensive benchmarking with other companies, the team published “Guiding Principles to Flexible Work Options,” which has gotten a very positive response from employees.

The Avanta imager is one of Wilmington’s premier products, but several employees had realized it could be even *more* successful if there didn’t have to be multiple assembly and test

# IP – including the PGAA

*work in the first place. Group shots clockwise from top right: The Eradicators, The Work/Life Balance Team, The Engineering Corrective Action Team, The Clothing Optional CIP.*

*The Sharper Image* developed a reformulated material that dramatically improves reciprocity response.

For over six years the Bushy Park operation has been seeking the best method of recycling polyethylene, the material used to protect master rolls of light-sensitive material.

*The Clothing Optional CIP*, after brainstorming both as a team and along with other employees, realized it would be economically and environmentally feasible to send the polyethylene back to Germany inside cardboard tubes that had to be sent to Germany anyway. Now, thousands of pounds of the material are recycled and thousands of pounds of landfill waste are avoided each year.

Although Bushy Park’s film orders increased significantly last year, the sheeter line on which it is partially manufactured sometimes stood in the way of even further success because of a convoluted setup. *The Eradicators* made a detailed analysis of the situation and figured out how to eliminate five sections of the line while maintaining the highest quality. Downtime decreased by nearly 700 hours and production increased by an additional 760,000 square meters of film.

lines. Disruptions on one line always caused a rippling effect throughout the production floor. *The Engineering Corrective Action Team* brainstormed, researched and analyzed the problem in depth and was able to consolidate three production lines into one. Errors are now significantly

reduced, thousands of dollars in expenses are saved, and the new system has already paved the way for future improvements.

### Into the Future

As Agfa approaches its second year as an independent company, our Continuous Improvement Process approaches its second decade as a corporate initiative. The stakes are even higher now, with new shareholders, long-term customers and all of our employees (many of whom are more recent arrivals through our acquisitions) expecting to benefit from our strengths – which for a long time



now have included continuous improvement.

For information on forming a CIP team or preparing a QEA write-up, contact the Quality Department on Ext. 4731 in Ridgefield Park, or visit the Quality section on InsideAgfa.

# people

Chris Malloy *Des Plaines*



There aren't enough hours in the day to get it all done – but Senior Warehouse Administrator Chris Malloy in Des Plaines somehow manages not only to get it done, but to get it done right the first time.

“Printing orders, handling ‘no finds,’ making truck appointments, doing stock checks, supporting

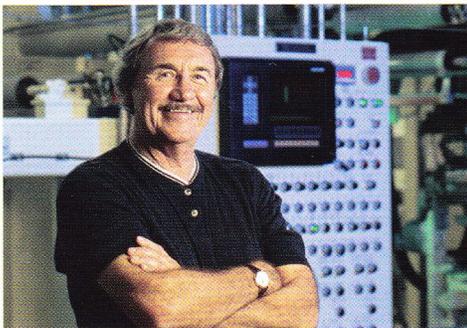
customer service, spending a lot of time on the phones – and trying to fit 12 hours of work into eight hours,” Chris says, is what a typical day at the Des Plaines warehouse is like. But Agfa’s corporate initiatives, such as CIP and ISO, in addition to his skill and the skill of his staff, are what make it happen. “Those corporate initiatives, in addition to diversity, safety, health and others are all part of a normal day at Des Plaines.

“It’s important for us to know what, when, and how everything needs to be accomplished in the warehouse,” Chris adds. “We have a great crew that gets the products on their way to customers on time.” Sometimes it takes a lot of coffee, he jokes, but they get it done, “and often we even smile when we’re through at the end of the day!”

Chris has been with Agfa for 25 years. After high school graduation he joined the Army and spent 14 months on active duty as a missile technician. He joined Agfa in 1974 as an assistant warehouse manager, moved over to customer service, and then became Senior Warehouse Administrator.

Married for 22 years, Chris and his wife Juanita, a nursing home receptionist, have two children, 19-year-old Jennifer and 15-year-old Kenneth, both of whom are music enthusiasts, and Kenneth, like his father, is very athletic. Chris has been coaching little league for the last 11 years, and he also bowls. “My family enjoys going to the neighborhood park and having fun. We also like working and helping out the world in any way we can.”

Jim Hill *Brevard*



Every employee, business associate, trucker, interviewee, new hire, retiree, serviceperson or taxi and limo driver who pulls into Agfa Sterling’s Brevard, North Carolina facility is a customer of Jim Hill’s. That’s because Jim is the Property and Security Supervisor for the site’s 440 acres.

“It is rewarding to know that all visitors to Brevard, employees and outsiders alike, leave the facility with a positive and lasting impression,” Jim says, “as well as the knowledge and confidence that we manufacture high-quality products in a timely manner.”

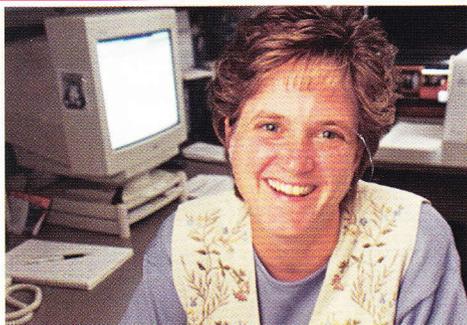
Jim joined DuPont in 1959. DuPont’s Diagnostic Imaging operation later became part of Sterling Diagnostic Imaging and earlier this year became part of Agfa. Jim’s responsibilities have always involved corporate land management, with environmental control, road maintenance, fire protection, and visitor activities now among the specific duties he undertakes with his team.

“Having an awareness of changing business needs and the ability to communicate these needs

effectively are the special skills we utilize to function properly,” he says. Toward that end, he adds, site management has always made available many leadership workshops, team-building seminars, quality control meetings, and public relations enhancement programs. “The most challenging aspect of my job has been to motivate all team members to keep the level of internal and external customer satisfaction as high as it can possibly be.”

Jim also says that becoming part of a well-established and respected company like Agfa will continue to positively impact the way all of ‘his customers’ react to their visits to the site.

Cathy Wall *Wilmington*



As employees in technical assistance know, the learning never ends. Products and technologies change, tools and programs change, and customers change. As Integrated Supply Chain Manager for Logistics (part of the World Wide Customer Service

learning. “As our business evolves, it becomes more challenging to keep up on all the latest changes and support an increasing number of products,” she says from the Wilmington base of operations.

Cathy has been with Agfa for 15 years, starting as a Field Service Engineer in Ohio, and then in Wilmington as a field service trainer and EPS telephone support supervisor. Supply Chain Manager is a new position for Cathy. Her primary responsibility is to manage Agfa’s relationships with third-party logistics suppliers, ensuring that the needs of the Graphic Systems field service organization are met.

“Since my position is new, I anticipate the most challenging aspects will be integrating myself into the new role and learning the ins and outs of inventory

course, takes continual training – something she is very comfortable with, having put herself through technical school at night (while working as an orthodontist’s receptionist prior to Agfa), and continuing today at college, part time, in pursuit of a bachelor’s degree in business management.

As a primary user of SAP beginning with its first rollout, Cathy knows how important it is for everyone to embrace the system. As a member of The Work/ Life Balance Team, she knows that it, too, is an enormously important initiative.

Next year, with her sister and nephew, Cathy plans to visit England, Ireland and Scotland. It’s not just a learning opportunity, it’s a double celebration: her nephew’s high school graduation – and her own

## MANAGEMENT MESSAGE



**Teresa Oakley**  
Vice President  
Human Resources

It has been over a year since I assumed my new responsibilities as Vice President of Human Resources, and I would like to report on some key HR initiatives that are under way, particularly in light of all the recent corporate activity.

As you know, the challenges began at the beginning of the year with the spinoff of Agfa from Bayer Corporation, which

required us to establish corporate functions such as compensation and benefits. In May, Agfa acquired Sterling Diagnostic Imaging, and we began the task of integrating Sterling's benefits into our own. The HR organizations from both Agfa and Sterling have been working diligently to ensure fairness both in benefits integration and staffing.

Establishing Agfa Corporation and acquiring Sterling provided us with the opportunity to reassess our HR systems to determine how best to align people practices with Agfa's business strategy, mission and values. This has been necessary to ensure our long-term success. We have, in turn, spent significant time developing an approach and strategy which we call *Investment in our Employees*. It was developed through the efforts of several task forces comprised of HR personnel and line management. The end results concentrate on a series of initiatives – initiatives that employees must work on individually, and those that are being undertaken on a corporate level.

On the corporate level, Agfa has developed an overall plan called the *Employee Development Cycle*. This umbrella plan focuses on such standard business requirements as recruitment, performance management, employee development, succession management, and employment termination.

Recruitment efforts will include (among other items) more internal postings, a consistent selection process, and university recruitment. Some of the new aspects of Performance Management will be a simplified method of appraisal, ongoing feedback, and employee/management accountability. Employee Development practices will now include leadership skill courses, rotational and diverse work assignments, and individual development plans managed by employees and managers. Succession Management will introduce tools to identify future leaders, developmental plans, and management accountability. And the Employment Termination process will be required to involve a management review committee, structured skill assessments, and legal compliance.

Then, to support this umbrella plan, we concurrently identified a set of core competencies or skills that are needed in all positions

Continued on page ten

SPOTLIGHT ON

# Dive

Agfa has come a long way in its diversity initiative. Four and a half years ago, in July 1995, Agfa's Management Committee approved the formation of a CIP team, which adopted the name Universal Spectrum, to address the topic. By the middle of 1996, a program to promote diversity awareness was rolled out. As part of the program a survey on employee attitudes was conducted, and when the results were completed by the fall of that year, Agfa President Erhard Rittinghaus made diversity a major topic at all of his employee meetings. Training and work/life balance were identified as two of the areas that needed the most attention.

### A Good Balance

Since then, over 90 percent of our employees have taken part in a successful series of diversity awareness workshops and seminars, and many are utilizing an official work/life balance program, developed by a CIP team.

In 1999, our strong foundation in diversity awareness played a key role in the creation of the new Agfa Corporation. As an independent company we promote the professional development and personal growth of our employees and the continuous achievement of diversity through a highly motivated work force. The effort is helping us become an employer of choice, which is a specific goal of the company's missions and values.



DEBORAH MULLIGAN



CYRIL KWONG

# rsity

## Honoring Differences

Following closely on the groundwork of all of these successful efforts, a new Diversity team was created to address other issues that came up in the survey, seminars, and workshops. As a result, the team began to identify, develop, and sponsor employee events that share – more than ever before – the considerable talents and distinguished heritage of many Agfa employees.

This year alone at Agfa there have been celebrations of the Chinese New Year, Black History Month, St. Patrick's Day, Bastille Day, Cinco de Mayo, Hispanic Heritage Month, an "On Your Own Time" personal hobbies event, Ethnic Food Days, a Melting Pot/Pot Luck festival and more.

"When the Diversity Team asked me to do something to help our employees celebrate the Chinese New Year earlier this year, I was both happy and proud," says National Customer Relations Manager Peter Lee. "First I said to myself, What can I possibly do? But then I thought about it and realized that I can introduce something that is dear to most everyone – food. Many people enjoy Chinese food, but I have found over the years that authentic Chinese food here in the U.S. is difficult to find. So my suggestion was to do a Chinese cooking demonstration specifically to show how dumplings can be made from scratch, the genuine Chinese way. Many of our employees seemed excited about the demonstration. I was proud to be Chinese, proud to be an Agfa employee, and proud of what I did that day."

## In Concert

Data Control Coordinator Stacey Rodriguez, a singer, and Mail Services Senior Clerk Burt DeCoteau, a pianist and composer, helped Agfa celebrate Black History Month with a concert in the Ridgefield Park cafeteria showcasing their enormous talents. "I was very flattered when I was asked to help our employees celebrate Black History Month," says Rodriguez. "Although I sing all the time and continue to pursue my musical interests, I had never done anything like this before. But everyone was so supportive. The concert allowed me to interact with co-workers whom I had never really communicated with before."

"On Your Own Time was initiated in Wilmington as an employee morale builder," says Senior Human Resources Manager Anne Naqi.



LOU DUBON & VIOLA MACK



time, and also to allow us a way to hold a raffle to raise money for our annual Holiday Charity Fund." More than a dozen Wilmington employees demonstrated hobbies and crafts. Michael Messina displayed his oil paintings on canvas and wood. Doris O'Connell showed her stained glass and fabric paintings. Ed Fowler demonstrated his specially built cages for abandoned and abused animals. Cyril Kwong showed his acrylic sketches. More than 200 employees attended. "So many employees were impressed by the talents of their co-workers," Naqi says. "Many just never knew what the person sitting next to them at work did on his or her own time. It was fun and educational."

## In Good Taste

In Branchburg, Ethnic Food Days, featuring full menus of French, German and Italian cuisine, were very popular. "We promoted the theme in the cafeteria with appropriate decorations to add to the ethnic ambience," says Administrative Assistance Karole Lechowski. And during Hispanic Heritage Month, Bushy Park Human Resources Manager Lou Dubon served paella in the cafeteria.

There was a similar event at our Des Plaines office. Chicago is known as one of the largest ethnic and religious melting pots in the country, which is why Des Plaines' diversity team chose Melting Pot/Pot Luck as its diversity theme. "Every employee was invited to bring in a dish representing their ethnic background," reports Customer Relations Representative Jan Topmiller. "We were all able to 'taste' the differences that day! We also had a small display with a piñata to recognize Cinco de Mayo – Mexican Independence Day."

"Reactions were overwhelmingly positive on all of these events, companywide," says Senior Human Resources Manager and Diversity Team leader Celeste Puch. "In many instances, these events challenged the assumptions we often make about the people we work with, and they raise our awareness proving that it always pays to keep an open mind."

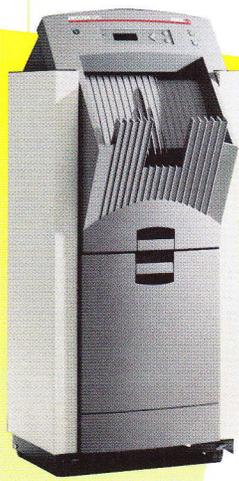
From a grass roots, employee-initiated effort, Agfa's program of diversity events has grown tremendously, and employees are looking forward to many more in the months



DORIS O'CONNELL

# products products products produ

## AGFA DRYSTAR 3000



### High-tech, small space.

This ultramodern-looking digital imager has been designed to be used for the widest variety of medical diagnostic uses, including computed radiology, CT, MRI, digital x-ray, vascular imaging, CR and DR. The Agfa Drystar

3000 is a favorite of many medical professionals because the images it produces have the look, feel and resolution of conventional laser images without employing a complex laser and optical system. The images are thermally produced on blue-tinted polyester media and can be diagnosed on a conventional viewing box. At only 24x16 inches the Drystar 3000 can be set up anywhere. No liquid chemicals, darkroom equipment or plumbing are required, and its internal spooling drive reduces waiting time.

## SCOPIX LT 670

**Maximum diagnostic information.** Agfa Scopix LT 670 is a clinical laser film that combines high speed and excellent image quality that is consistent even in less than ideal processing situations. Medical technologists appreciate its physical properties, which result in care-free film transport of their laser images, no matter what the climatic conditions may be. Agfa Scopix LT 670 features a low fog level, high maximum density and high shoulder

contrast, resulting in clinical images that are pleasing to the eye. The state-of-the-art film also features a very neutral color in its nonexposed areas, while its exposed areas have a pure black impression without the slightest hint of unwanted tones. Agfa clinical film scientists developed "cubic grain" technology, which gives the film excellent stability at both 45- and 90-second processing cycles.

## POLARIS 100 XT

**Meets the tough demands of the daily newspaper market.** Now the fastest model in Agfa's family of Polaris computer-to-plate workflow systems, the Polaris 100XT has a throughput capability of up to 150 plate-per-hour. Newspaper printers appreciate its automatic plate handling, online processing ability, and broadsheet and doubletruck plate formats. The system digitally exposes register punched as well as unpunched plates. The

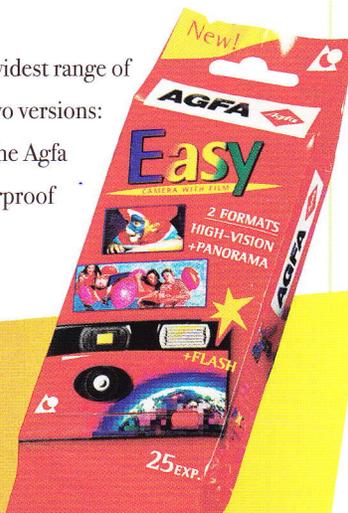
entire computer-to-plate system takes place without operator intervention, resulting in significant time and labor savings for the publisher, and increased efficiency of the deadline-pressured newspaper printing process. The Agfa Polaris 100XT joins the Polaris 100E and the Polaris 100, which is one of the most successful newspaper computer-to-plate systems on the market.

## AGFA SINGLE-USE CAMERAS

**Several great cameras to choose from.** There are now four different single-use cameras from Agfa for simple-to-use, "anytime" and "anyplace" photography, with a variety of styles and features. All have convenient point-

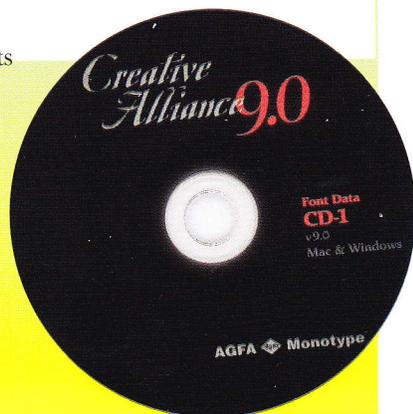
and-shoot simplicity, are preloaded with Agfa HDC 400 Plus or Futura 400 film, are handed in to the dealer for processing, and are available in 35mm or Advanced Photo System (APS) formats. The Agfa Easy is great for indoors, outdoors, or on cloudy days. The Agfa Le Box Go!, with an improved lens for

sharp pictures at the widest range of distances, comes in two versions: Outdoor and Flash. The Agfa Le Box Ocean is waterproof up to 12 feet deep.



## AGFA CREATIVE ALLIANCE 9.0

**Sophisticated, dynamic, and madcap typefaces.** The Creative Alliance from Agfa Monotype is the most powerfully creative collection of typefaces and image fonts currently available. The latest version is a collection of over 7,000 fonts, available for viewing both in a convenient reference book and on a companion CD-ROM. The most important digital foundries partnered with the best independent type designers to create this premier collection. The Creative Alliance 9.0 offers the largest assortment of Exclusive digital fonts ever collected, in addition to the popular ITC Library and Design Fonts Collection, Adobe typefaces, the complete Monotype Classics Library and the largest selection of images and symbols.



## AGFACHROME CRD

**Duplicate slides as true as originals.** When professional photographers, graphic arts designers and even consumers need duplicates of original slides, the duplicates should be as true as possible to the original. Agfachrome CRD Duplicating Film meets that requirement. Among the characteristics of this premier Agfa film are excellent reproduction of skin tones, exact reproduction of detail, clean whites, good definition of highlights and shadows, outstanding sharpness, and greater processing stability and scanning compatibility. With Agfachrome CRD Duplicating Film it is possible to produce any number of slides in sizes or with cropping that may differ from the originals. These slides, in turn, can be used for projection or as artwork for printing.

## MANAGEMENT MESSAGE CONT.

*Continued from page seven*

throughout the company. These include sound decision-making, achievement of goals, interpersonal and communication skills, innovation and risk-taking, leadership behavior, and building and supporting the Agfa Culture. Each of these competencies, or performance factors, has a sequence of specific definitions and goals that will be communicated to all employees as the year moves on.

Other initiatives HR supported this year include our own web site on InsideAgfa, which gives employees ready access to HR information including a "Who's Who" directory in HR; job postings; benefits information; the training and development curriculum; diversity-related information, and more. In early 2000, we will add company policies to the web site as well.

Agfa's HR organization is dedicated to providing effective service to all Agfa employees. Now, with SAP being implemented, there will be more opportunity for us to assist employees to do their jobs more efficiently with the improved communications and documentation SAP will allow. We look forward to helping you shape a better way to do your job as Agfa Corporation itself continues to evolve, and to provide you with the necessary tools to be successful in the year 2000 and beyond.

*Interaction* is published for the employees, families and retirees of Agfa Corporation, 100 Challenger Road, Ridgefield Park, NJ 07660. Comments are welcome.

This magazine was created with Agfa prepress systems. All photographs in this issue were taken with AGFACOLOR and AGFACHROME film. Fonts used are from the AGFATYPE collection. The page layouts were exposed on ALLIANCE RECORDING HN film in Agfa AVANTRA imagesetters, using an Agfa Postscript RIP then developed using AGFASOLID dry rapid access chemistry. Final output utilized Agfa CRISTALRASTER and Agfa BALANCED SCREENING technology. Proofing was completed using Agfa proofing products. Color separations were made on ALLIANCE RECORDING HN film. Agfa Howson plates were used for printing.

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